I. DAY THREE: BASIC RITUAL TECHNIQUES

The previous two courses teach the full minimum necessary to work solo magick. The remaining two days will concentrate on group ritual. In Day Three, we will discuss the basic techniques.

To explain the outline, relate the outline of the three Essentials of Eastern magick - mandalla, mantra, and mudra.

A. Mantra - Music and Chanting

Discuss the three types of mantra most often used in Neopagan ritual: memorized chants (for creating and focusing the Group Mind), impromptu chanting (for advanced meditation and growing together), and plainsong (for worship).

1. Memorized Chants

Teach them the chants listed below. Then run quickly (for familiarization purposes only) through "We Wander Now", "Hoof and Horn", "Burn Bright", "Circle 'Round the Fire", and any others that I can remember on the spot.

a. "We All Come from the Goddess"

We ALL - COME from the GODdess
AND to HER we SHALL reTURN
LIKE a DROP - OF - RAIN
FLOWing TO the O-CEAN (repeat)

b. "I Circle Around"

I CIRcle aROUND, I CIRcle aROUND ...
the BOUN-'DRIES OF the EARTH ...
WEARing my LONG tail FEAthers AS I GLIDE ...
WEARing my LONG tail FEAthers AS I GLIDE ... (repeat)

c. "Air I Am"

(evenly spaced, every syllable emphasized)

Air I am,
Fire I am,
Water, Earth and Spirit I am ... (repeat)

d. "The Goddess Chant"

iSIS, aSTARte, diANna, HECaTE,
deMEter, KALi - inNAna (repeat)

2. Impromptu Chanting

Discuss the uses of impromptu chanting: ecstatic magick

(where one can't count on elaborate chants) and for deep probing rituals, where they are used for free association. As an example, demonstrate the three-word style that Starhawk teaches in SPIRAL DANCE. Emphasize the use of beat and tempo as unifying factors.

3. Plainsong

For contrast, sing the NROOGD classic, "O Earth Mother" to demonstrate that not all ritual music needs to be in the form of basic chants.

B. Mudra - Movement and Dance

1. Ritual Dance

(This section has not yet been finalized. Current plans focus on simple circle-dance steps, the famed "spiral dance", and then brief discussion of free-form dance and ecstatic ritual.)

2. Theater Techniques

Remind people that one of the purposes of ritual is to catch and hold the attention of Child Self, and point out that the language that Child Self speaks best is melodrama. Instruct them that gestures and actions in the Circle should speak loud enough that words are not necessary. Then, since they undoubtedly won't get the point, do two exercises to rub their noses in it.

a. Banishing Exercise

Set up a circle, then pick out someone who seems to know a bit about magick. Get him to go to one of the quarters and ground and center. Then have him visualize a threat approaching from his quarter, and tell him to do a banishing. (He will inevitably do something traditional, elaborate, and sterile.) Relax him, then ask the class how THEY would have reacted, if THEY were attacking the circle, to what he had done. Pick an absolute novice, put him in the same place, ground and center, pump them up with melodrama and heroics, then describe a different menace and instruct them to scare it off, turn it away (don't use the word "banish"). See if the gestures aren't more dramatic.

b. Charging Exercise

Pick a couple who seem to know a bit about magick (if possible), and have them ground, center, and use the wand and chalice for a symbolic Great Rite. (See if they do anything more sexual than just stick the wand into the cup - I doubt it.) Relax them, then point out to the class that the energies to be raised in this exercise are to be earthy and sexual, EXACTLY like the "rush" or thrill of heavy flirtation. Then pick the most COMPATIBLE-looking couple (if possible) and repeat the exercise (and see if they don't make it more energetic).